

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 remain active in this case, Claims 1, 9, 11, 13 and 15 having been amended by the present amendment, and Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16-24 having been withdrawn from consideration as directed to a non-elected invention.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 5, 9 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kim (U.S. Patent No. 6,744,090); and Claims 3, 7, 11-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Geffken et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,680,514).

In light of the several grounds for rejection on the merits, the original active claims have been amended to clarify the claimed invention and thereby more clearly patentably define over the prior art. To that end, amended Claim 1 states that the conductive plug includes Si and that the silicon carbide film is flat and electrically conductive, and that the metal compound film and the electrode are also flat. The changes to Claim 1 are believed to find support in the disclosure as originally filed and are not believed to raise a question of new matter.

Turning now to the merits, as above indicated, amended Claim 1 recites that the claimed semiconductor device includes a conductive plug including Si. The outstanding Office Action relies on the Kim reference as disclosing a conductive plug 105 (column 4, line 6). However, the Kim conductive plug/interconnection 105 is a copper lower interconnection as disclosed at column 8, lines 19-20. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Kim does not disclose a conductive plug including Si as recited in amended Claim 1.

Furthermore, amended Claim 1 defines the claimed semiconductor device as including a flat electrically conductive silicon carbide film, a flat metal compound film and a

flat electrode. The outstanding Office Action identifies correspondingly a silicon carbide film 120 (column 4, line 64), a metal compound film 145 (column 5, lines 3-5) and an electrode 160 (column 5, lines 11-12). In the Kim semiconductor device, part of the silicon carbide film 120, metal compound film 145 and electrode 160 is formed in the trenches 135, 136 and a via hole 140, as shown in Figures 2B, 2C and 2F. Accordingly, the silicon carbide film 120, metal compound film 145 and electrode 160 disclosed by Kim are not flat and thus Kim does not teach the claimed features that these elements are flat.

The outstanding Office Action further states that in Kim the silicon carbide film 120 is formed on the conductive plug. However, as shown in Kim's Figure 2G, the silicon carbide film 120 is formed on a first insulation layer 115. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this is further evidence that Kim does not disclose or suggest the flat silicon carbide film recited in amended Claim 1. In view of the deficiencies, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1 patentably defines over Kim.

The deficiencies above-noted in Kim are not believed to be remedied by the Geffken et al reference.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, and in light of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the amended claims patentably define over the prior art and are in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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